

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

DEC 18 1931

U. S. Department of Agriculture

il 2
1.9
3 HN
HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, December 18, 1931.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Homemade Christmas Decorations." Information from the Forest Service and the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A., and from the Ladies' Home Journal.

--oOo--

Did you ever hear of that fine old custom called "bringing in Christmas?" It originated way back in the good old days of Merrie England when families and neighbors and friends went out together on Christmas Eve to gather greens and bright berries to decorate the house and to cut and drag the Yule log to the burning, as they used to say. Most of us don't have fireplaces anymore large enough to accommodate a stout, old-time, Yule log, but we can still preserve the custom of bringing in Christmas by gathering greens and fashioning them into wreaths and other household decorations.

When the gifts are all finished and mailed, when the children are all home from school on vacation, and the relatives from out of town have arrived, then is the time to go green gathering and to make the wreaths for Christmas. Greens put up a few days before Christmas rather than far in advance are fresher looking and there is more real holiday thrill at having them about.

Christmas decorations from the fields and meadows. Wreaths, festoons and table trimmings--all fashioned at home. Different and beautiful decorations from the highways and byways made at home at little or no cost. Doesn't that idea appeal to you? I think it is an especially good one for a thrifty year like this. I know a group of neighbors in a little New York town who get together every year to go out after greens and then to make them up in wreaths and other decorations.

Last year I saw several beautiful wreaths which they had made. There was one planned to hang outside a front door--circle of pine, spruce and laurel with bunches of red rose hips here and there to give color. Another was a plain wreath of hemlock with strawflowers picked in the garden the summer before and carefully dried for winter decorations. All sorts of nature's treasures including berries, cones and seed pods can be used for Christmas wreaths and table decorations. Pine cones, poppy pods, Japanese lanterns, winterberry, bayberry, bittersweet, and even the burry heads of teasels--all these--make artistic and beautiful decorations if skillfully used. Even fruits, particularly those junior members of the orange family--kumquats and tangerines, may be grouped against a wreath of dark spruce.

Tomorrow, say, or Sunday would seem to me fine days to go out and see what gifts the winter countryside has to offer for good cheer decorations for your home. But, when you go, it's well worth considering what to cut and what not to cut. In these supercivilized times, ruthless Christmas cutting is rapidly

killing off some of our most beautiful shrubs and trees.

There's holly, for example. Holly is one of the most beautiful native trees in our woods and one of the very few broadleaf trees that are green in winter. Its shiny leaves and red berries have long made it a favorite for holiday decoration. Fond as we are of holly, we seem to be arranging matters so that our children and grandchildren may not even know what it is. The experts in the Forest Service tell me that it is fast disappearing and is more in danger of extinction through so much cutting for market than any of our native trees. Holly grows very slowly. Its seeds take two years to germinate. So it has an especially hard time to keep up with the inroads made on it every year. No longer are holly trees conspicuous along the roadsides as they used to be. And much of the holly on the market now lacks the bright red berries.

Thoughtful people in many places are no longer cutting ground pine and laurel, because these plants are also in danger of being lost from our woods in a few years if they are ruthlessly pulled out. And, of course, they are sparing the small trees of any sort.

There are many different evergreens in the woods. Why not select for your use the kind that grows most plentifully in your locality? In sections where pine and juniper abound, why not select those for your wreath? And if hemlock and fir are rare, why not let them stand?

Now about making the decorations. Wreaths that hang on the outside of the house--on windows, doors and entranceways keep fresh longest. Indoors ground pine, boxwood and laurel last longer than pine, spruce, cedar, balsam, fir and other narrow-leaved evergreens. Hemlock dries out quickly in heated rooms and then quickly shakes off.

After selecting your evergreens, there are a few accessories that you will need. A frame or foundation for the wreath, for one thing. And, for another, pliable wire to bind the evergreen twigs on with. Some people advise a wooden hoop for the frame of the wreath. Others use Number 9 wire, which may be purchased at any hardware store. About a three-foot length of it formed into a hoop with the two ends overlapping, fastened securely, with Number 24 wire makes a very practical foundation frame.

How do you make the wreath? Well, I'll try to describe the way I've often seen it done, step by step. Of course, it takes care to make a fine wreath. The evergreen twigs must, of course, be fastened on very securely or they will slip and spoil the wreath. The same is true of the pine cones or berries that you use. During the process of making the wreath, have the frame resting on the table and the sprays of evergreen, cut in uniform lengths, lying conveniently near. Now hold the spool of wire in your right hand and with your left hold the material in place between the thumb and forefinger. After binding the wire frame together place one or two sprays of your evergreen against the frame, holding them in position with the left hand. Then slip the spool of wire between the thumb and the frame and draw it tight. Repeat this until the wreath is finished.

Wreaths can be made either round or graduated. For the round even wreaths, the evergreen twigs to be wound on the frame should be cut into uniform lengths and the wiring continued around the entire frame, carefully disguising the starting point. If the wreath is to be graduated, however--if there is to be more green at the bottom, say, than the top, the first twigs should be cut short, then increased gradually until about half the wreath is finished. Then go back and begin again at the top and make the opposite side like the first. Finish with

a few larger sprays and perhaps a bow of red ribbon. If your wreath is to hang flat against the wall or door, it can be made one-faced or one-sided. In making it, just keep the upper or darker side of the leaves toward you as you work.

No more time to talk about the Christmas greens today. But next week, maybe Monday, maybe Tuesday, when we're discussing the menu for Christmas, we'll talk a little about table decorations also.

The menu for today, however, is the matter in hand now. Have you ever treated your family to Salmon cutlets? How about having them for dinner tonight? And, to go with them, scalloped potatoes or diced creamed potatoes. And peas, buttered. For salad, let's have apple, pineapple and celery salad with fruit salad dressing or mayonnaise. For dessert, lemon pie. Once more that menu. And then I'll give you the recipe for salmon cutlets. The menu: Salmon cutlets; Scalloped or diced creamed potatoes; Peas buttered; Apple, pineapple and celery salad; and, Lemon pie.

If you have a green cookbook, you'll find the cutlet recipe right at the top of page 36. If not, I'm about to give it to you. Pencils and notebook ready?

First the ingredients:

2 pounds of fresh salmon steak cut 1 inch thick
1 egg
1 tablespoon of water
3/4 teaspoon of salt
2 cups of fine bread crumbs, and
Fat for cooking.
I'll repeat those. (Repeat.)

First wipe the salmon, remove any bones, and cut in serving portions. Beat up the egg, water and salt, dip the fish in this mixture, roll in the crumbs, and place on a board to dry for a short while. Heat the fat in a skillet, put in the cutlets, reduce the heat, and cook slowly for 10 to 15 minutes. Then the fish should be done through and golden brown on both sides. Drain on absorbent paper and serve garnished with lemon and parsley.

Monday: "Plans for the Christmas Dinner." Menus for an inexpensive as well as a more elaborate dinner.

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the project. It describes the purpose of the study and the objectives that were set at the beginning. It also provides a brief overview of the methodology that was used to collect and analyze the data.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the data that was collected. It includes information about the sample size, the demographic characteristics of the participants, and the specific measures that were used to assess the variables of interest.

3. The third part of the report is a presentation of the results. It includes a series of tables and figures that show the mean scores, standard deviations, and correlations between the different variables. It also includes a series of paragraphs that describe the findings in more detail and provide a summary of the key results.

4. The fourth part of the report is a discussion of the results. It includes a series of paragraphs that interpret the findings in light of the existing literature and provide a summary of the conclusions that can be drawn from the study.

5. The fifth part of the report is a conclusion. It includes a series of paragraphs that summarize the main findings of the study and provide a final statement about the overall results.

6. The sixth part of the report is a list of references. It includes a series of citations for the books, articles, and other sources that were used in the study.

7. The seventh part of the report is an appendix. It includes a series of tables and figures that provide additional information about the data and the analysis. It also includes a series of pages that contain the raw data that was used in the study.

8. The eighth part of the report is a final statement. It includes a series of paragraphs that provide a final summary of the study and a statement about the author's contact information.